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REMARKS

After entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 1, 3-5 and 17-31 are pending in the application. Claims 23-31 are new.

The Examiner made "Final" his earlier restriction requirement concerning claim 2. Accordingly, that claim has been canceled.

Claims 1, 3-5, and 17-22 stand rejected as anticipated by Hudetz (5,987,773). Such rejection is respectfully traversed.

Hudetz is understood to operate by reading a UPC bar code from an item (e.g., a can of soup), passing the barcode data to a database that maps the UPC code to a URL, and then accessing information from the mapped URL.

In some cases, the barcode data Hudetz passes to the database isn't the complete UPC barcode, but is, e.g., only the manufacturer ID portion of the complete code. In this case, the data passed to the database may yield *several* matching URLs – one for each product manufactured by the manufacturer. For example, if the manufacturer ID "31251" is passed to the database shown in Fig. 4, Hudetz's system would return URLs from the 3 records that contain "31251". See Hudetz at col. 8, lines 53-64.¹

Claim 1 has been amended to specify that the "additional objects" do not have "the same object identifier sent from the first device to the second device." This distinguishes Hudetz, in which all of the "additional objects" for which URL information is returned have *the same* identifier sent from the first device to the second device (e.g., "31251" in the cited example).

Claim 23 is similar to claim 1, but omits the added limitation, and instead inserts a requirement that the claimed act of "identifying additional objects" occurs "*after* initiating said link" based on the first object. Again, this distinguishes Hudetz, in which URLs for all the products marked with manufacturer ID 31251 are provided to the first device *before* any link is initiated.

Claim 3 is likewise not believed to be taught by Hudetz. For example, consider the "routing means."

¹ The reference to records 61, 64 and 65 at col. 8, line 62 is believed to be in error, and should be 62, 64 and 66. (Reference numerals 61 and 65 do not appear in the Hudetz drawings.)

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Since this claim element is in "means-plus-function" format, 35 USC §112, para. 6 comes into play, and the corresponding portion of the specification must be consulted.

Regarding the routing means, the specification gives a variety of information, such as:

As more particularly detailed below, the handler 16 provides a response in accordance with the particular watermark payload. The response may be provided directly by the product handler to the device 12, or the handler may respond by communicating with a remote resource 18 (which may be, e.g., a data repository or service provider).

In the former case, the handler 16 may identify a URL corresponding to the watermark (using the database 17), and return the URL to the application 28c. Application 28c can then pass the URL to a web browser 28b in the device 12, and initiate a link to the internet site identified by the URL. Or the handler may have some locally stored data (e.g., audio or video, or software updates) and send it to the device 12 in response to the watermark.

In the latter case, the handler 16 does not respond directly to the device 12. Instead, the handler responds by communicating with a remote resource 18. The communication can be as simple as logging receipt of the watermark message in a remote repository. Or it can be to authenticate device 12 (or a user thereof) to a remote resource in anticipation of a further transaction (e.g., the communication can form part of an on-line licensing or digital rights management transaction). Or the communication can request the remote resource to provide data or a service back to device 12 or to another destination (e.g., to initiate an FTP file transfer, or to request that a song selection identified by the watermark be downloaded to a user's personal music library, or to update software installed on device 12).

In still other cases, hybrids of the two foregoing cases can be employed, e.g., handler 16 can send some data back to device 12, while also communicating with a remote resource 18.²

Claim 3 more specifically narrows this operation by specifying that the routing means forwards "at least certain of said processed data [i.e., data processed by the originating device] to a product handler means." This claim is thus drawn to the "latter case" detailed in the specification, i.e., in which the router does not simply return a URL to the application 28c. Instead, the routing means forwards certain of the processed data to a product handler means.

Hudetz does not operate in this fashion. If the routing means in Hudetz is regarded to be the database table shown in his Fig. 4, information from this table is not

² Specification, page 5, line 16 – page 6, line 9, emphasis added.

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forwarded to a product handler. Rather, as in the “former” case detailed in italics, above, information from his database table is simply returned back to the originating device (local host 28).

Accordingly, Hudetz is not believed to teach the arrangement of claim 3.

(Other distinctions between claim 3 and Hudetz exist but are not belabored, e.g., the “logging” requirement.)

Claim 5 introduces further means-plus-function limitations – that of “means for generating an encapsulating file” and “means for distributing said file to predetermined party.” Properly construed with reference to applicants’ specification, Hudetz has no teaching of such elements. (Cited nodes 24 and 26 do not operate in the manner required of the claims “means” elements.)

Claim 17 has been amended in a manner similar to claim 1, distinguishing the Hudetz arrangement in which URL information is provided for several objects that share the same manufacturer ID. Claim 17 now requires that the object payloads “that may be forthcoming” do not share with the first object the payload data with which the database was queried.

New claims 24-29 are modeled after claims 17-22, but include a different limitation, i.e., sending address information associated with the foreseen object payloads only *after* initiating the electronic link (see the last printed line of claim 24). Again, the several URLs that Hudetz may provide, are all provided *before* any link is initiated.

New claims 30-31 rewrite original claims 20 and 21 in independent form. Applicants respectfully submit that Hudetz fails to teach any arrangement that includes foreseeing “an order in which other object payloads may be forthcoming.” Nor does Hudetz contain any teaching that the order is based on an order of printed pages in a bound volume. (The citations in the Action show related concepts, but not those claimed.)

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Favorable reconsideration and passage to issuance are solicited.

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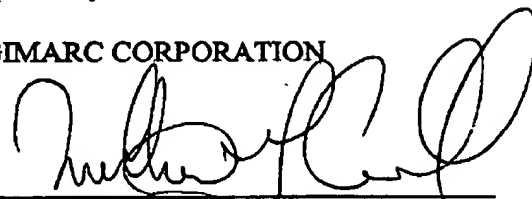
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Respectfully submitted,

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